

**Amendments to the Specification**

Please replace paragraph no. [0025] with the following amended paragraph:

[0025] As can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, the second connector plate 12 is provided with one or more elongated slots 24 adapted to receive a fastener such as a shoulder screw. Preferably, all of the elongated slots 24 are substantially parallel with each other. In order to add additional rigidity to the bracket 10, each of the elongated slots 24 may be disposed within a slot stiffener region 28. Stiffener 28 is preferably made by punching a channel 29 around the region of each slot 24. More preferably, the ~~stiffener 28~~ channel 29 comprises 1/16<sup>th</sup> inch round punched stiffener region. In order to aid an installer, measurement indicia 26 may also be provided along the length of each slot 24.